

## SALT AND SALAD FARE LAST WEEK

Clever Entertainers Fail to  
Atone For Two Cohan  
Shows.

SHOP-MADE SLANG  
HAS FALSE NOTE

Ill-Timed Laughter Hardy Criterion  
of Public Estimate of "The  
Devil."

By ALLEN D. ALBERT, Jr.

A dinner is rarely had all the way through. The salt is usually pretty good, no matter what has happened to the soup, the meat, and the dessert. This past week we have had to depend on the salt and the salad.

"The Devil" is the devil. "The Talk of New York" could hardly be the talk of New York longer than would be required to give it a swift kick properly placed. "Fifty Miles From Boston" belongs at least fifty miles from Boston.

The trouble with the two musical comedies is too much Cohan. Making plays of this class is like organizing a circus. A vast deal of cleverness is needed in addition to poms, fad, fad, and a manager. Young Mr. Cohan has been too much occupied in getting rich to produce whirlwind entertainments with any considerable contribution beyond the wind. Witness "The American Idea" of unhappy memory and these two offerings at the National and the Columbia.

Slang did more for "The Talk of New York" than Mr. Cohan. A little entertainer—not the best in the world by a whole lot—did more for "Fifty Miles From Boston." In other words, what was good in these two plays should be credited to Victor Moore and Edna Wallace Hopper rather than to the author set forth with so much ink on the billboards. This has been known to occur in other productions.

But the use of slang, of stage slang, is a curious thing. Nobody ever heard such talk anywhere else. If a real burgher from the Bowery were to hand one of his lads only a sentence of Mr. Moore's slang he would get what has been picturesquely termed a dint in his lid. Paul Nicholson had something of this same vocabulary in "The Girl Question." Occasionally one of these manufactured phrases sticks—as the rest of it is only occasional. The rest of it is only occasional. The rest of it is only occasional. The rest of it is only occasional.

Up in New York they had an editorial writer on the New York Sun who had once been a tough. He knew the tenements as most of us know the small town of our childhood. If he walked Avenue A or Ave. C, he would be as much friends as the paymaster of a railroad gang. So he undertook once to point out the waste of opportunity these slang actors were making.

"You don't have to reel off a great load of words in a sequence of phrases that sound like the boys' house," he said. "Go down to Bleeker street and pick up a little of the genuine article. You'll make a real hit." But the actors knew better than any mere editorial writer, and so they went their way with a polite invitation to the author of "My Manie Rose" to go his.

Essential Difference. Note the difference! The first act of "Salvation Nell" was written one way; Mr. Moore, Mr. Nicholson, and their associates write the other. Nobody cares a rap for the latter. But the slang of the former contributes to an atmosphere of fine realism, has the interest of the true, and is a factor in real comedy and not that which certain actors have described as the "Ladies and Gentlemen—Laugh-or-I-Lose-My-Job" kind.

There was some laughter over at the Belasco. Too much of it. Intelligent Americans with hearts pure and sympathetic should not be inclined to laugh at the corruption of their fellows. That is a spurious refinement which makes light of human souls and finds fascination in the Lord of Darkness.

This may seem old fashioned, this view. But it is, for very fact, down to the minute. Those who laugh did not do so out of hearty enjoyment. They did so, no doubt, from a mixture of impulses—were willing to display their full appreciation of Mr. Arliss as an actor; they did not care to parade their innermost convictions for others to see; they did not think that the deeper significance of the drama; they did not know. A great deal of what seems hopeless in this world of ours is due only to ignorance or thoughtlessness. But in the end our people assert soundness of character and trustworthiness of judgment. Otherwise, how have two companies starved to death with "The Devil" and this one come to look starvation in the face?

The vaudeville was the best entertainment in town—from every standpoint. There was interest enough for the thinking in Mr. Stevens' vigorous and faithfully drawn characters from Dickens. (He was vastly more at home there than in "The Devil.") There was fun enough in the sketch, "Back to Wellington." And the whole bill—here is the most significant thing—was a pleasant taste in the mouth. Some managers have wondered themselves faint over the inroads of vaudeville. They might learn a lesson if they thought over this last aspect of the situation.

Tribute to Critic.

The retirement of Mr. Hector Fuller, (for several seasons dramatic editor of the Washington Herald) from the field of local criticism should not pass unnoticed in this column. It is too distinctly a local loss.

One of the great specialties which every newspaper manager encounters in its dramatic department is to obtain dependable information. "Opinion critics," in the phrase of the crafts, are many. But critics who have information, and the ability to make a lens of that information that their readers may the better appreciate dramatic performances are not many. They are in fact unappreciated.

Mr. Fuller had this information and this ability. He had also deep-rooted convictions on the trend of the drama, convictions in which this newspaper sometimes did not concur. But he wrote of them frankly, he wrote entertainingly, and he offered Washington theatergoers abundant and accurate information as to the stage. No such workman can retire from such a field without depriving it of that it should be reluctant to lose. Good wishes will go with him everywhere from an unusually wide circle of readers.

## "FORTUNE HUNTER" WILL OPEN ITS METROPOLITAN SEASON HERE

Comedy Work of Winchell  
Smith, Author of "Brewster's Millions."

"WITCHING HOUR"  
AT THE BELASCO

John Mason in Thomas Play, and  
Robert Edeson Complete  
Week's Program.

The metropolitan premiere of "The Fortune Hunter," in which Cohan and Harris are starring, Thomas W. Ross, will be made at the Columbia this week. The new comedy, the work of Winchell Smith, author of "Brewster's Millions," is declared to be one of the sensational plays of the sort seen on the American stage. Mr. Ross has found a vehicle exactly suited to his talents. In "Brewster's Millions" the hero's endeavor is to spend a fortune in a prescribed length of time, but in "The Fortune Hunter" it is necessary for Mr. Ross to win one within a set period.

Down and out in New York, he contrives with a professional schemer to go into an inland town, make love to the daughter of the richest man there and marry her. He is to pose as a model young man and according to his arrangement is to compel the young woman to propose. Although the idea appeals to him as a most ridiculous one, he decides to take a chance.

"The Fortune Hunter" is a succession of laughs and the cast is an all-star one. Among those in addition to Mr. Ross are Miss Mary Ryan, who will be remembered for her great success in "That Little Affair at Boyd's," at the Columbia last year; Forrest Robinson, Sidney Alinsworth, Edgar Nelson, Walter Hamilton, George Louie Tucker, Walter Horton, and Ogden Stevens.

BELASCO—John Mason in "The Witching Hour." "The Witching Hour," with John Mason in the stellar role, will be the attraction at the Belasco Theater this week.

There seems to be no question as to the public's fondness for the drama with the mystic element. Mr. Mason played the character of Jack Brookfield, the hypnotic gambler, nightly in New York all last season and part of the present season to capacity houses. New York reviewers are said to have agreed that this is an unusual production.

The scientific discussion of telepathy in "The Witching Hour" is not presented in the usual prosy manner. The lines in the Thomas play are said to be full of rich bits of sparkling dialogue. "The Witching Hour" is in four acts, and the local production is laid in Louisville, Ky., and Washington, D. C.

Mr. Mason will be supported by the original Hackett Theater company. NATIONAL—"The Call of the North." Henry B. Harris will present Robert Edeson at the New National Theater tomorrow night in George Broadhurst's play, "The Call of the North," a play adapted from Stewart Edward White's famous story, "Conjuror's House." The annual visits of Mr. Edeson to this city have been responsible for the enjoyment of such popular plays as "The Soldiers of Fortune," "Ransom's Policy," "Strongheart," and "Classmates."

The story of "The Call of the North" has to do with the adventures of Ned Trent (Mr. Edeson), a free trader in the Canadian border lands. "The Call of the North" is laid in the picturesque and primitive region of the famous Hudson bay territory, hundreds of miles beyond the outskirts of civilization, in uppermost Canada.

CHASES—Vaudeville. Chase's vaudeville bill this week includes the Harrison Armstrong company in "Circumstantial Evidence," the Mirza-Golem Persian troupe, the Barrows-Lancaster company, Sydney Deane and company, Fred Sosman, Dave Jones and Harry Mayo, "Bliss, Bomm, Brrr," and the interesting motion pictures of "The Tunny Fisheries."

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THOMAS W. ROSS.  
At Columbia in "The Fortune Hunter."

the merry mazes of their latest comedy hit, "Like Father, Like Son."

ACADEMY—"The Cowboy Girl."

Clever Sue Marshall comes to the Academy tomorrow night at the head of the new Killy and Britton melodramatic musical show called "The Cowboy Girl." Miss Marshall is a bright and talented little woman, and associated with her in the musical scenes are her "Frisky Broncos," a name given the chorus of vivacious songbirds who dance, sing, and look pretty. The dramatic part of "A Cowboy Girl" is of the better sort, and though the play possesses several rather sensational scenes, yet they could not be termed lurid, and are relieved by the comedy element and catchy special music numbers. Among the original song hits written for the play are: "The Life of a Cowboy Girl," "All the World's in Love," and "The Boston Tourist Girls."

MAJESTIC—Moving Pictures and Vaudeville.

Another attractive bill is booked for the Majestic Theater this week. The four acts of vaudeville include Whiteley and Bell, comedy entertainers; W. L. Hall and his French Polles coming direct from his New York engagement at Hammerstein's Victoria Theater, where he made a hit for four weeks with his musical novelties, "A Parisian Flirtation." Taken in his "Slide for Life," and Clotilde and Montrose, comedy acrobats.

LYCEUM—"Gaiety Girls."

At the New Lyceum Theater tomorrow afternoon Pat White and his famous "Gaiety Girls" will begin a week's engagement. Mr. White is surrounded by a strong company this season, which will be seen in "Longs in Mudville" and "The Night of the Fight," two musical comedies.

The vaudeville section of the program will include Jennings, Webb and O'Neil, in a comic sketch entitled "Whose Girls Are You?"; the marvelous Malvern troupe, George T. Davis, in illustrated songs; Pat White, in his specialty, in which a number of pretty girls take a prominent part, and others.

GAYETY—Reilly and Woods Show.

Patrons of the Gayety Theater during the week beginning tomorrow matinee will have an opportunity to see Reilly and Woods' "big show." The management claim that nothing has been spared in their endeavors to make the present show one of the best from every point of view. Pat Reilly, a show unto himself, will head the list of fun producers. The show will be a three-hour run of music, song, and dance.

Week Beginning Tomorrow Night at 8:20 Promptly.

NEW NATIONAL MATINEE Wednesday and Saturday at 2:20 Promptly.

The Only Theater in Washington Offering Exclusively American and Foreign Stars of the First Rank.

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ROBERT EDESON

WITH

Sue Marshall

As "GYP"

AND A

ROLLING CHORUS OF

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Admission 50c; reserved section, 75c; children, 25c. Tickets at Gray & Gray's, 1200 11; L. M. King's, 609 F. Price's, 28th and P. Harris, 34 and F. S. W. ap4-15

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"Something comes right over the footlights and grips you, and you sit tense"—Philadelphia Times

"Greatest Play of the Season," Boston Globe.

Sam S. and Lee Shubert (Inc.) Present

John Mason

In AUGUSTUS THOMAS' MASTERPIECE,

One Year at the Hackett Theater, New York.

NEXT WEEK

SEATS READY NOW

Mary Mannering

In the Greatest Success of the London Season.

"THE TRUANTS"

As Played by MISS LENA ASHWELL at Her Kingsway Theatre, London, Eng.

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